



MACEDONIAN  
CENTER FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
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CENTER FOR  
THE STUDY OF  
DEMOCRACY



Southeast European Leadership for  
Development and Integrity



на граѓански организации  
за борба против корупцијата

# Delivering on the Promise of EU Enlargement: 30 Years of Governance and Anticorruption Reforms in Central and Eastern Europe

## Policy Forum

13 December 2019, Skopje

EU Enlargement has arguably been the European Union's most successful policy, delivering change and prosperity across Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Balancing between political expediency and technical achievements in the accession process has always been delicate. And, the EU has continuously reshaped its enlargement preparation tools and policies, invariably adding more complexity but also rigour to the process. The promise of enlargement to the Western Balkans, delivered back in 2003 and reconfirmed in 2018 though has lost steam with the addition of geopolitical concerns from rising Russian and Chinese influence in the region, and the succession of EU-internal crises from the past decade. The EU has slowed down the process, trying to find the right balance between needed internal reforms and enlargement. This has jeopardised the local political support for the EU project in the Western Balkans, in turn threatening the peace and prosperity of the whole region. The 2019 Regional Good Governance and Anti-Corruption Forum will look for solutions to move on with enlargement, while delivering on the governance reforms in the Western Balkans, eagerly expected by the citizens of the region.

Corruption and state capture remain a major challenge for the Western Balkans. They have been at the core of EU internal concerns regarding the current and previous enlargements, as member-states from CEE have either not caught up with rule of law standards even after accession, or have slid back on achieved progress. SELDI data on corruption pressure in the Western Balkans since 2001 have confirmed the tremendous progress the region has made in this respect in the past two decades. Yet, it remains far behind even the worst performing EU member states. The lack of results in tackling corruption, especially in the abolition of high officials who abuse their power and increase the influence of local oligarchs in political decision-making, has dampened further citizens' hopes for change. This has sparked popular protests against governments across the region. In addition, people have continued to depart their countries for better life in the EU, leaving behind some of the fastest shrinking populations in the world. This has been actively exploited by authoritarian powers, like China and Russia. They have provided the Western Balkans' political elite with an escape clause against reforms of dubious nationalistic illiberal narrative and alternatives, garnered with grandiose non-transparent infrastructure, energy, and military deals.

For the citizens of the region EU enlargement remains the best hope for more prosperous and peaceful life, which is still widely reflected in opinion polls. Yet, for enlargement to continue delivering, it is important that the countries from the region find new impetus for reforms, despite the delay of the start of the accession negotiations in North Macedonia and Albania at the end of October 2019.

The one-day policy forum in Skopje will be organised in cooperation between the SELDI anti-corruption initiative ([www.seldi.net](http://www.seldi.net)) and the Macedonian CSO Anti-Corruption Platform. It will serve as a platform for sharing experiences, alerting for any emerging risks, discussing and seeking solutions to the current state capture and corruption risks in the Western Balkan countries. During the forum, the SELDI experts will present the main findings and policy recommendations from the *2019 Corruption Monitoring System*, based on the 2019 corruption survey in 6 Western Balkans countries. Representatives of the public institutions will talk about the practical challenges of initiating a large-scale anti-corruption campaigns. Specific focus will be placed on the possibilities for collaboration between the policy-makers, the civil society, the international organisations and the media in developing monitoring instruments and red flags for countering these structural problems.



This event has been organized with the financial assistance of the European Union, USAID and the Central European Initiative (CEI). The views expressed during the event do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission, USAID and the CEI.



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## Agenda

13 December 2019, Skopje

**9:30**      **Registration and Welcome Coffee**

**10:00**      **Opening**

*Opening and moderator:*

**Aleksandar Kržalovski**, Director, Macedonian Center for International Cooperation/  
SELDI Coordinator, North Macedonia

*Welcome remarks*

**Stevo Pendarovski**, President of the Republic of North Macedonia

**Jennifer R. Littlejohn**, Chargé D' Affaires, U.S. Embassy in North Macedonia

**Freek Janmaat**, Head Operations I, European Delegation in North Macedonia

**Dr. Slogana Taseva**, President of the Board, Transparency International, CSO  
Platform for Anti-Corruption, North Macedonia

**Ruslan Stefanov**, Director of the Economic Program, Center for Study of Democracy /  
SELDI Knowledge and Outreach coordinator, Bulgaria

**11:00**      **Session 1 Between Needed Reforms and Geopolitical Balancing Acts:  
Corruption and State Capture in the Western Balkans**

**Dr. Aleksandar Gerganov**, Senior Analyst at the Center for Study of Democracy /  
SELDI Knowledge and Outreach, and Assistant Professor at the Institute Philosophy  
and Sociology (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

**Emina Nuredinoska**, Head of Civil Society Department, Macedonian Center for  
International Cooperation (MCIC), North Macedonia

**Ruslan Stefanov**, Director of the Economic Program, Center for Study of Democracy /  
SELDI Knowledge and Outreach coordinator, Bulgaria

Moderator: **Misha Popovikj**, Program Coordinator, Institute for Democracy Societas  
Civilis Skopje (IDSCS), North Macedonia

**12:30**      **Coffee break**

**12:45**      **Session 2: Delivering on Reforms in the Judiciary Institutions**

**Natasha Gaber Damjanovska**, Director, Academy for judges and public prosecutors,  
and former constitutional court judge, North Macedonia

**Veljko Rutović**, Special Prosecutor, Montenegro

**Arthur Graham**, Head of Rule of Law and Human Rights Department in the OSCE  
Mission to Serbia

**Predrag Kolaković**, Judge, Judges' Association, Serbia

Moderator: **Natali Petrovska**, Executive Director, Coalition „ All for Fair Trials “, North  
Macedonia

**13:45**      **Lunch**

**Key Note: Radmila Šekerinska, Minister of Defence, North Macedonia**



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**15:00**      **Session 3: Fostering Political Will and Technical Capacity for Tackling Corruption: Achievements in Legislative and Institutional Framework**

**Grigore Florin POPESCU**, chief military prosecutor of the Service for investigating corruption offences committed by military personnel, National Anticorruption Directorate (DNA), Romania

**Biljana Ivanovska**, President, State commission for prevention of corruption, North Macedonia

**Artur Hasanbelliu**, Director, Supreme Audit Institution, Albania

**Mevludin Džindo**, Assistant Director, Agency for Prevention of Corruption and Coordination in Fight against Corruption, Bosnian and Herzegovina

**Miroslav Milićević**, Vice-president, Anti-corruption council, Serbia

**Blerim Kelmendi**, Department for Combating Corruption, Anti-Corruption Agency, Kosovo\*

**Moderator: Snezana Kamilovska Trpovska**, Project coordinator, Macedonian Center for International Cooperation, North Macedonia

**16:30**      **Coffee break**

**16:45**      **Session 4: Civil Society Against Corruption: How to Help Build Democracy that Delivers on Anticorruption and Good Governance**

**Dario Jovanovic**, Director, Pod Lupom - Coalition for Free and Fair Elections / Centres for Civic Initiatives (CCI), Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Moderator: Lejla Deronja Suljic**, Project Manager, Centers for Civic Initiatives (CCI), Bosnia and Herzegovina

**17.45**      **Closing remarks**

**Dr. Slogana Taseva**, President of the Board, Transparency International, CSO Platform for Anti-Corruption, North Macedonia

**Ruslan Stefanov**, Director of the Economic Program, Center for Study of Democracy / SELDI Knowledge and Outreach coordinator, Bulgaria

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence